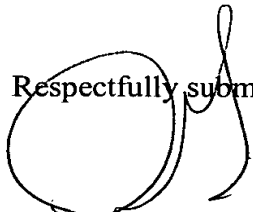


REMARKS

Claims 1-9 have been amended, and claims 10-32 have been canceled.

Examination of the claims, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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DE 7051879 v1

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

1. (Once Amended) A catheter assembly comprising:  
a hollow sheath having a proximal portion and a tip;  
an elongate operative element slidably and rotatably housed within the sheath, the  
operative element comprising a distal end and a proximal end;  
the elongate operative element comprising a relatively stiff[, self-supporting]  
initial section extending from [at] the proximal end thereof; [and]  
a rotatable combined connector secured to the proximal end of the operative  
element, said combined connector comprising a data/information connector and a mechanical  
connector; and said combined connector comprising an angled rotary alignment surface that is  
adapted to blind mate with a corresponding connector of a drive unit that has an angled rotary  
alignment surface.

2. (As filed) The catheter assembly according to claim 1 wherein said  
data/information connector comprises an electrical connector.

3. (As filed) The catheter assembly according to claim 1 wherein said  
mechanical connector comprises a rotary drive connector.

4. (Once Amended) The catheter assembly according to claim 3 wherein  
said rotary drive connector comprises a drive surface which simultaneously extends [an] axially  
[-] and circumferentially[-extending drive surface].

5. (As filed) The catheter assembly according to claim 1 wherein said  
combined connector comprises a rotary alignment surface.

6. (As filed) The catheter assembly according to claim 1 wherein said  
elongate operative element comprises an imaging cable having an image element at said distal  
end thereof.

7. (As filed) The catheter assembly according to claim 1 wherein said initial  
section comprises a metal tube.

1                   8.       (As filed) The catheter assembly according to claim 1 further comprising  
2 a fluid seal between said proximal portion of said sheath and the initial section of the elongate  
3 operative element.

1                   9.       (Once Amended) The catheter system according to claim 1 wherein said  
2 elongate operative element comprises a flexible imaging core and a relatively stiff tube at the  
3 proximal end thereof to create a relatively stiff[, self-supporting] initial section of the elongate  
4 operative element extending [at the] from the proximal end thereof.

Please cancel claims 10-21.

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